

FIRE DEPARTMENT CONSOLIDATION

E-mail Comments & Questions

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“True conclusions can only be reached, or approached, by pursuing the truth without regarding to where it may lead or what its effect may be on different interests.”

The information from this research should be used by administrators in decision-making. It is not intended to present any solution, but present in one format the major considerations that should be weighed.

The intent is only to discuss needs, option, etc., and not to debate the merits or implementation of any particular plan or idea. The goal is simply to find out, on the basis of the information provided, where there is any objective opposition to taking the feasibility to the next step.

This report has been prepared for the following reasons:

- * The City has a commitment to constantly evaluate all of the services that it provides so as to consider opportunities for quality and productivity improvements
- * The City has a commitment to address the costs of providing services so that the City may continue to effectively use its financial resources and move toward a more stable financial condition
- * The City has a commitment to look at options that might address the growing need for public safety services in the community

A Systematic Approach to Fire Service Consolidation and Merger ICMA. Management Information Publications. Washington, DC. Clearinghouse Report #40599

Each time there comes a point of dispute or indecision, you must ask yourself the question "What's best for the public?"

Goal of Consolidation: To eliminate (wasteful or unneeded) duplication of physical plant, manpower, apparatus, equipment, political, and fiscal resource (A Systematic Approach to Fire 1).

Reason to consolidate: Systems exist immediately adjacent to one another, each with a complete, and many times, duplicated set of resources (A Systematic Approach to Fire 1).

Funding Problem: Ever increasing demands by schools, federal and state requirements, funding for water, streets, police, parks, libraries, sewers, and a multitude of other necessities have made the task of the governing bodies more difficult. In

addition, annexations became a real threat to many Fire Districts and thus made Fire Protection a potential political issue (A Systematic Approach to Fire 2).

Reason to Consolidate: We duplicate apparatus, manpower and equipment while, at the same time, work closely together through automatic aid agreements at emergency scenes (A Systematic Approach to Fire 3).

Functional Consolidation: Leave each department whole, yet allow for use of equipment, facilities, and manpower interchangeably throughout all departments (A Systematic Approach to Fire 3).

Functional Consolidation: Merging of resources which remain the property of the parent organization yet are used by the "functionally consolidated" departments as though they were property or functions of a single department (A Systematic Approach to Fire 41).

Partial Consolidation: Separate fire departments are retained, and a special agreement is formed to handle specific challenges. An example is shared staffing of a fire station just effectively serves more than one jurisdiction.

Operational Consolidation: Separate fire departments that have similar staffing levels and run the same kinds of calls combine into one unified department.

Merger: A larger department absorbs a small department, resulting in a single entity.

Mutual Aid: Departments give reciprocal assistance for emergency management, fire, rescue, emergency medical, hazmat and other disaster response services. Such an agreement may specify joint response to all alarms in a given geographic area or automatic response by the unit closest to the incident, regardless of jurisdiction.

Mutual Aid: refers to a reciprocal assistance by organizations under a prearranged plan or contract that each will assist the other when needed.

Example of Functional Consolidation: Consider all vehicles and apparatus to be the responsibility of one repair shop. Department "A's" mechanic can easily serve and maintain both departments' automobiles. Department "B" now has an additional vehicle mechanic to work on apparatus (A Systematic Approach to Fire 41).

Procedure: Keep ALL employees informed of what is being done and why. Memos, personal appearances on closed circuit TV by the Chiefs and articles in newsletters should be provided throughout the process on a scheduled basis (A Systematic Approach to Fire 4).

Procedure: Chiefs need to establish "Task Forces" whose job it is to develop master plans for each division and sub-division within the proposed consolidated agency (A Systematic Approach to Fire 4).

Procedure: Develop an Organizational chart so all involved can better understand relationships and organization structure (A Systematic Approach to Fire 5).

Problem with Procedure: New organization will be administered by not one, but all Chiefs involved. The joint Chiefs will have manifold responsibilities. Not only will they have to keep their own departments functioning, but they will also have to integrate their department in to the new organization, and be responsible to the governing bodies of all agencies, all the time keeping budget, personnel, and other functions separate as required by state law and bargaining unit contracts (A Systematic Approach to Fire 5).

Procedure: For Functional Consolidation governing bodies must agree to integrate manpower, apparatus, and equipment through a series of intergovernmental agreements that will allow all the agencies to function as one (A Systematic Approach to Fire 6).

Procedure: To accomplish "functional consolidation", parties to such an action should develop intergovernmental agreements. These agreements when drafted, reviewed by attorneys and agreed upon by the governing bodies, will outline the terms of a contract between two or more departments and enable them to legally commingle their physical resources (manpower and equipment) in order to effect savings of economy and efficiency (A Systematic Approach to Fire 42).

Procedure: Check X State Law - Does state law allow a reduction in force in a merger? If not attrition will take care of that through retirements and job changes (A Systematic Approach to Fire 6).

Procedure: Move all Department Heads and Directors to one administration location as soon as possible (A Systematic Approach to Fire 6).

Unions: Impact Bargaining may take place. A single union contract will be negotiated, where before there were differences. In addition, rules and regulations, policies and other support documentation will need to be completed (A Systematic Approach to Fire 7).

Process: The unexpected and overlooked will ALWAYS show up (A Systematic Approach to Fire 9).

Process: Give the staff and people involved firm direction from the elected officials and the Chiefs. Be sure they understand that it is their responsibility to enter into the process with open minds and a commitment to accomplish the mission (A Systematic Approach to Fire 9).

Process: From the beginning, invite the press, radio, TV, whichever is available to you, to attend board meetings or workshops that address the subject of consolidation or merger (A Systematic Approach to Fire 34).

Hurtibise, Ron. "Fire rescue services top study group's consolidation plan" News-Journal Online. May 24, 1999 pg. 1

Ranked most important service level issue as:

1. The amount of time it takes fire units to respond to fires and medical emergencies
2. Provision of advanced and basic life support services
3. Number of firefighters and paramedics who respond to a call
4. How costs will be shared
5. Response by "back-up" units
6. Equipment at fire stations
7. Minimum training levels

Hurtibise, Ron. "Consolidation group reviews Fire, EMS concerns". News-Journal Online. March 30, 1999 pg. 1

- * How would training levels and standards for dispatch operations be affected under a consolidated structure?
- * How would costs of a consolidated fire department be split among residents?
- * Who would transport all medial patients to are hospitals under a consolidated model?

Senter Jr., Edward, "Initiating a Marketing Planning Process in the Norfolk Department of Fire and Paramedical Services". National Fire Academy. October 1997.

Products of the Fire Department are the services provided to the community including: fire protection, emergency medical care, fire prevention, technical rescue, hazardous materials response, loss prevention, disaster preparedness, and public education (Senter Jr. 225).

Price consists of a Fire Department's operating expenses (Senter Jr. 225).

Effect on economic development: The emergency services many corporate leaders find desirable include quality emergency medical care for employees and their families, sufficient fire suppression resources to protect commercial property, the ability to perform prompt and effective salvage operations to protect merchandise and valuable records, prompt response and automatic fire alarms that does not draw undue attention to a commercial facility.

Managing Fire Services. ICMA Training Institute. 1988

Reasons for using intergovernmental service contracts to provide fire services: (Managing Fire Services 437)

1. To make us of qualified personnel
2. To make use of existing facilities
3. To achieve economies of scale
4. To eliminate service duplication.
5. To organize services in the most logical way, rather than have them constrained by jurisdictional or area limits.
6. To take politics out of service delivery
7. To meet citizen demands.

Determining Fair Share of fire service costs for written contracts: (Managing Fire Services 437)

1. Fire Department operating costs
2. Money paid to support pensions
3. Cost of apparatus and major equipment depreciated over a specific time period
4. Cost of the physical plant over a given time
5. Percentage of fire department use by the contracting municipality over a given time period
6. Percentages of assessed valuation of the contracting municipality to the total assessed valuation of all areas protecting.

Regional consolidation provides the potential advantages of: (Managing Fire Services 439)

- * Centralizing fire department management and reducing administrative costs
- * Centralizing the dispatching and communication network and other fire department support services such as maintenance and training
- * Improving fire service capabilities because of increased resources and specialized equipment
- * Unifying fire prevention codes
- * Reducing insurance premiums because of improvements in the ISO rating.

The primary disadvantage of consolidation is the perceived loss of local control, and this has been the reason why consolidation is frequently opposed by individual departments as well as by local politicians (Managing Fire Services 439).

Jensen, Alec. "Consolidations a la carte". Fire Chief. February 2000. Pg. 102-105

While it's estimated that in 1990 there were only 20 to 30 consolidations happening nationwide, we estimate that currently (as of February 2000) there are more than 500 such efforts in one stage or another (Jensen 102).

Fire Districts often look to consolidate via contract or annexation. The annexation of high-value property by neighboring cities has many districts looking for ways to remain economically and operationally solvent by joining forces with others experiencing the same or similar pressures (Jensen 102).

In situations where local control remains a key objective, providers have identified the following specific areas where cooperation makes sense without sacrificing the ability to set service levels and conduct long-term planning (Jensen 104).

- * Joint purchasing, support services or operations
- * Run imbalance, an inequality in the frequency with which one provider serves another's area, which is difficult to value from a cash perspective, is being traded for in-kind services. In some areas providers are actually purchasing services for cash.
- * Station siting is becoming one of the best examples of cooperation - in some cases this results in jointly funded or staffed facilities.

Catchment areas for EMS response are usually defined by hospitals, not by governmental jurisdictions. In addition, healthcare organizations such as HMO's greatly prefer to deal with a single provider in a given area, rather than a patchwork of local agencies (Jensen 104).

A cooperative arrangement should begin with some form of short-term (two or three year) contract. This allows each party the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the relationship, while at the same time considering any loss of autonomy and local control. Following this period of "dating", the parties are in a position to effectively evaluate whether it's in their respective best interest to stay the course, "get married" or seek separate accommodations. Tragically, most failures are the result of

some form of personal sabotage (Jensen 105).

What are the schedules of the different agencies? 24 on/48 off or 72 on /96 off?

Need protocols to provide answers to issues raised by unions and elected officials.

Develop an operations guide for a shared facility to guide the day-to-day operation and answer "who, what, where, why, and how".

Giorgio, Robert. "The Consolidations of Consolidation. Fire Chief. February 2000. Pg. 106-115.

Preparing a combined budget: Although each district had an annual audit, they maintained their budget information in different formats. While some districts cooperated with the new board, other refused to turn over existing documents, and those records that were obtained provided little information (Giorgio 106).

The individuals who weren't happy with the consolidation focused on defeating the budget and were successful in their efforts (Giorgio 107).

Developed standard operating guidelines for the uniform operations of the forces (Giorgio 107).

Sold surplus vehicles, reduced the overall age of the fleet, replaced most of the light-duty fleet, and constructed a new maintenance facility (Giorgio 107).

Streamlined purchasing procedures and saved thousands of dollars through joint purchasing (Giorgio 107).

Result of consolidation on the "Operations Division" (Giorgio 106).

* Stronger incident command - company officers no longer had to operate as incident commanders - thus reducing the number of people available to fight fires

* Higher staffing levels

* First responder EMS

* Expanded role of volunteers

Other improvements (Giorgio 108).

* Updated response grid system

* More fire drills

* Pre-fire plans completed each month by company personnel, sketched using a CAD program and then installed in a directory in the battalion chief's command vehicle.

* More public education programs.

Result of consolidation on the "Training and Safety Division" (Giorgio 108).

- * Uniform certification-based training

- * Improved training facilities

Result of consolidation on the "Motor Maintenance Division" (Giorgio 110).

- * New maintenance facility

- * Newer apparatus fleet

Result of consolidation on the "Logistics Division" (Giorgio 114).

- * Station renovations

- * Savings on day-to-day supplies

Result of consolidation on "Fire Administration" (Giorgio 115).

- * New administration building

- * Centralized purchasing

- * Centralized record keeping

- * Established Local Area Network

Considerations for consolidation (Giorgio 108).

- * Have a clear understanding of the ownership of all facilities and equipment

- * Clearly evaluate the public's expectation of their fire and rescue services, so the new department can include these in its long term planning. Hold those changes that affect appearance only

- * Firefighter safety

- * Provide continuous dialog to diminish rumors and maintain the right focus

- * Prepare to modify job descriptions or reorganize

- * Identify transitional goals that are realistic, evaluate productivity and measure achievements.

Thompson, Stephanie. "Spotting a trend: Fire Department Consolidation". American City and County. April 1992. Pg. 25-29

Consolidated fire service works to overcome political boundary issues because the closest units respond to an emergency. Unfortunately jurisdictional boundary lines aren't determined based on response times or access. Annexations in particular develop a crazy political subdivision that looks more like a patchwork quilt than a rational protection-service area (Thompson 26).

Many times, jurisdictions will leapfrog to desired tax base areas and leave pockets of non-revenue-generating problems for others to protect (Thompson 26).

Benefits of consolidation: (Thompson 26-27).

- * Lower apparatus replacement requirements - Larger departments need fewer pieces of reserve apparatus for an equal number of frontline rigs. Consolidation also reduces the expensive duplication of specialized apparatus like aerials and hazmat units.
- * Enhanced career opportunities - Although the number of people at the topmost echelons is reduced, the organization as a whole is larger, which means that someone is always retiring or moving elsewhere. With this steady overall turnover, bright young officers have greater opportunity for advancement.
- * Joint training facilities
- * Specialization of various functions - smaller departments can't afford full time training and code enforcement officers
- * Consolidation of pension resources
- * ISO rating improvements
- * Cost reductions through volume purchasing
- * Fewer fire stations because of larger scale planning
- * Faster response time
- * More efficient personnel allocation
- * Increased levels of service for the same dollars spent
- * Regionalized public information and education programs
- * Consistent system-wide code requirements
- * Elimination of redundancy, resulting in cost savings
- * Better future use of resources and reorganization.

Labor groups should be involved from early on and convinced of consolidations merits (Thompson 29).

Line employees should be mixed up, shuffled around immediately (Thompson 28).

Consolidation can't be a disguise for a reduction-in-force. If regionalization is used to get rid of positions, it will fail. Consolidation's cost savings come primarily on the capital side, not the personnel side. The fact is that consolidation usually

reduces personnel levels slightly in any case, by triggering retirements. The remaining personnel should be sufficient to provide superior service within the enlarged jurisdiction (Thompson 28).

Pepler Jr., William. "Grounds for Consolidation". Fire Service Today. December 1982. Pg. 31-32

Advantages of regional consolidation: (Pepler Jr. 31)

- * Broader tax base; the cost of the department is spread out over a larger area, allowing the fire service to less of a financial burden on an individual municipality. This also blunts the impact of local politics on fire department operations.
- * Elimination of overlaps in administration, communication, fire prevention, fire service training, maintenance
- * Because people will be drawn from the entire region, better qualified personnel will be available for almost every aspect of operations
- * ISO Ratings
- * Improve the region's ability to respond to large incidents

Problems (Pepler Jr. 33)

- * The available financial resources of the local government may not be adequate to support the desired levels of fire protection
- * Indirectly related to finance is the inability to provide fire prevention maintenance or public relations programs or to meet data processing needs
- * The talent required for the efficient and effective management and administration and operation of the fire department may not be available.

McCormick, Patrick. "Examining the Feasibility of Regional Consolidation". American Fire Journal. February 2000. Pg. 22-25

Questions to ask yourself: (McCormick 22).

- * How can I "sell" the idea to the troops?
- * Is there a way to measure the effectiveness of the newly organized department?
- * What about deployment issues, i.e., how many people are assigned to each company...How many companies respond to different types of alarm...etc.?
- * How does fire research relate to consolidation?
- * What effect will consolidation have on responses?

* Are any other measures necessary to improve fire safety in a consolidated jurisdiction?

Reasons for consolidation: stations too close to each side of boundaries, numerous small alarm and dispatch facilities in adjoining communities, small and substandard training facilities and the desire to have access to a large repair shop (McCormick 22).

Consolidation can expand the tax base for fire service, more-effectively utilize personnel and equipment and eliminate duplication of services such as stations, training facilities and communication centers by geographically adjacent agencies (McCormick 22).

One of the greatest benefits is staff specialization. A higher quality of staff leads to improved training, statistical analysis, public education, fire prevention and other related functions (McCormick 22).

Consolidation allows some companies to be eliminated and manpower distributed to fully staff remaining companies. This creates a better response to all areas, using less resources. The result is a reduction in tax rates, and possibly across-the-board reductions in insurance rates, as the newly formed district earns a lower insurance grade (McCormick 22).

Training: One well-equipped training center with a qualified teaching staff can provide better, more-consistent training than two or more training centers scattered among the same metropolitan area. Consolidation of training divisions brings together the best staff to provide specialized training. Better organized, highly professional trainers can provide a much better program.

Firefighters who have been trained consistently by one organized training staff will provide a more unified effort at fires. Contrast this to mutual aid companies acting independently of each other on the fireground (McCormick 23).

Hiring: One central personnel department that recruits, tests and hires personnel for the consolidated fire department will substantially reduce costs and duplication. This central personnel department would assure that consistent standards are met (McCormick 23).

Repairs: One central repair facility for vehicles and apparatus is also possible under a consolidation plan. Again, specialized tools, equipment and staff are among the benefits (McCormick 23).

The insurance industry's fire defense grading system has been a significant part of its resources deployment history. This imperfect system gave the fire service a process to justify procurement of equipment and staff to accomplish a standard set of firefighting tasks (McCormick 23).

Fire protection costs vs. Fire Protection benefits (McCormick 23).

- * How many companies are needed and where should they be placed?
- * How many personnel should be assigned to each company?
- * How many and which companies should be sent to an incoming alarm?
- * When should a company be temporarily moved up or relocated to fill a gap in coverage caused by companies that are busy?

Companies should be distributed in a way that will ensure equal coverage commensurate with demands for service and existing hazards (McCormick 23).

Alternatives to consolidation: mutual aid, automatic aid, joint power agreements, and countywide mutual procurement

programs (McCormick 23).

Measuring success: (McCormick 24).

- * Effectiveness and productivity
- * Distribution of costs and benefits
- * Fire Insurance
- * Evaluating fire protection investments

Also evaluate: (McCormick 24).

- * Management/labor relations
- * Computer deployment analysis
- * Target hazard areas
- * Building and equipment maintenance
- * Projected population growth
- * Community expansion
- * Water supply
- * Demographics
- * Training deficiencies
- * Physical fitness of personnel

Analyze response times with fire stations placed in different locations throughout the city. Computer analysis for the consolidated area (McCormick 24).

It takes about 2 years to choose a site and then build a fully operational fire station

Isman, Warren. "Consolidation of the Anchorage (Alaska) Fire Department". Fire Chief. February 1977. Pg. 13-16

Get the planning department involved

It is necessary to adopt the emblem of the new organization, new patches, new vehicle identification, and standardized color

format for vehicles. How much per vehicle(Isman 14)?

Major cost was bringing the lesser paid firefighters to the cost of the higher paid firefighters in the other agency (Isman 14).

How do you handle insurance and sick leave, different medical plans, retirement plans, pay schedules, etc.(Isman 14)?

When you combine two departments with different operating procedures somewhere you have to come out with a common procedure to let the one group know how to operate with the other group. Were there different procedures? Keep that which is good, and throw out that which was poor(Isman 14).

As far as fire prevention code, building code and fire prevention code enforcement program, will that in any way be effected by consolidation (Isman 15)?

Has consolidation given you a pool of manpower to place emphasis on an important area(Isman 15)?

How do you overcome the feeling among personnel that they are still in separate departments? Mix them up right away (Isman 15).

Jurkat, Peter. "Regionalization Study". Fire Chief Magazine. August 1976. Pg. 72-74.

Fire protection standards are rather loosely defined. A community's primary interest may be to reduce its ISO rating, but does this goal produce optimal fire protection? ISO may put too much emphasis on property value and not enough on the ability of a fire department to protect lives (Jurkat 72).

Combined fire districts cannot only justify, but can afford specialized equipment. Regional departments will be better able to assess the need for specialized equipment, better able to plan its allocation and use, and be better able to finance it (Jurkat 74).

Rule, Charles. "Consolidation/regionalization: Answers to the future?". Fire Chief. January 1992. Pg. 32-34

Fire service continues to suffer from the disadvantage of not having measurable standards for staffing engines and ladder companies based on community risk. What percentage of commercial occupancies is sprinklered? What is the average age of the jurisdiction's buildings (Rule 32)?

When we talk about staffing, should we also look at quality, such as training or physical fitness (Rule 33)?

Annexations in particular develop a crazy political subdivision that looks more like a patchwork quilt than a rational protection service area. Many times, jurisdictions will leapfrog to desired tax base areas and leave pockets of non-revenue generating problems for others to protect (Rule 33).

Potential benefits of consolidation: (Rule 34)

* Lower apparatus replacement requirements. Larger departments need fewer pieces of reserve apparatus for an equal number of frontline rigs. Consolidation also reduces the expensive duplication of specialized apparatus like aerials and hazmat units.

* Enhanced career opportunities. Although the number of people at the topmost echelons is reduced, the organization as a whole is larger, which means that someone is always retiring or moving elsewhere. With this steady overall turnover, bright young officers have greater opportunity for advancement.

- * Specialization of various functions
- * ISO rating
- * Volume purchasing
- * Fewer fire stations because of larger-scale planning
- * Faster response times
- * More efficient allocation of personnel
- * Increased service levels for same dollars spent
- * Regionalized public information and public education programs
- * Consistent system wide code requirements
- * Elimination of redundancy resulting in cost savings
- * Better future use of resources and reorganization
- * Uniform pay scales and savings through consolidation of pension resources.

Streuli, A.V. "Consolidation of Fire Districts". Fire Journal. November 1970. Pg. 15-17.

Benefits of consolidation:

- * ISO rating
- * Elimination of duplication of services
- * Elimination of duplication of personnel
- * Elimination of duplication of equipment
- * Purchasing
- * Response strength
- * Large-fire operations
- * Elimination of boundary lines
- * Training

- * Apparatus
- * Staff specialization
- * Communications
- * Training facilities
- * Training aids
- * Clerical staff
- * Repair facilities
- * Special equipment
- * Hose tower
- * Stronger programs
- * Upgrading of recruits
- * Promotional selectivity
- * Capital improvements
- * Retention of personnel
- * Forced analysis and revised perspective

Rule, Charles. "Could regionalization solve your problem?". Fire Chief Magazine. August 1976. 68-71

An inventory of population, area, man-made and physical barriers, equalized valuation, personnel, apparatus, value of physical facilities, specific hazard areas need detailed studies (Rule 68).

In depth consideration must be explored in the following areas:

- * Emergency alarm response patterns
- * Fire station location
- * Command and supervision
- * Emergency medical services
- * Personnel
- * Communications

- * Central purchase and capital outlay
- * Training
- * Physical facilities
- * Fire loss management
- * Fire apparatus maintenance

Sells, Peter. "Consolidation poses training challenges". Fire Chief. April 1999. Pg. 28-30.

- * How would you harmonize the differences in our incident management systems?
- * Would we cross-train all personnel on the three SCBA in use across Metro at the time, or select one for the entire city?
- * What would we require of a training records management system, and what records were currently being kept?
- * What curriculum would form the backbone of our firefighter training programs?
- * Defib notwithstanding, what would be the standard for EMS delivery by the new consolidated fire services, and what training would be required to achieve the standard?
- * What reference texts and manual were currently in use, and what would be required?
- * What would the structure and staffing of the training division be?

Wagner, Mary Jo. "Consolidation: Two experts offer a positive approach". National Fire & Rescue. Winter 1996. Pg. 21-24

The decrease in departments will be linked to demographics and topography more than anything else. As cities grow closer together and as border lines become blurred, the rationale behind having individual fire departments is threatened (Wagner 21).

Most states have laws on the books that specifically prevent employees from losing their job through a merger or consolidation (Wagner 22).

A merger can make all the sense in the world, but if people don't trust each other, it won't ever happen (Wagner 22).

Analysis: Look at the elements that would be better provided together, and evaluate your organization and its resources (Wagner 22).

Presentation: Present your findings to the parties involved, and if you both agree that there is a compelling reasons to proceed, then you must obtain approval from your governing boards to conduct a study (Wagner 22).

Study: A feasibility study can be conducted by your own department or by a consultant. And anybody that has ever been through the process will tell you that a clear direction and set of goals mapped out in advance is a key to success (Wagner

22).

Strategic Plan and Presentation: Having a detailed strategic plan will make it easier for the parties to agree and will help create a solid presentation for the joint elected official involved. The officials will then decide if the plan should be implemented or terminated (Wagner 23).

The four major obstacles to a merger or consolidation are turf, power, politics and control (Wagner 23).

The biggest issue normally faced is loss of control. One way to eliminate the concern is to be very specific in whatever agreement or contract you sign (Wagner 23).

Keep your elected officials and staff well informed - "rumor control" (Wagner 24).

Set common terminology. Draft a common incident command protocol, a resource and inventory of equipment manual, and a mode dispatching system analysis.

Thomas, Jan. "When one plus one makes one". Fire Chief. March 1994. Pg. 105-106.

Consolidation model:

- * Determine feasibility - explore potential venues, specific benefits and possible challenges. Get commitments from all involved jurisdictions and agencies. Have decision making authorities approve resources to develop a consolidation plan.
- * Form and activate advisory group - Form a central executive committee and a number of working groups. Executive committee will most likely consist of the chief and City manager of each participating jurisdiction. Working groups will be charged to develop specific elements of the plan. Include representatives of local media, business community, and general public in the proper capacity.
- * Identify key needs, issues, requirements, and constraints - Identify needs (don't need to resolve them but just bring them to the table)
- * Develop goals and objectives - They must be measurable and achievable to be effective
- * Establish criteria for selecting programs and approaches - Suggested programs and approaches will need to be prioritized according to some rational method
- * Develop and analyze alternative programs and approaches- Each alternative is analyzed according to its projected costs, benefits, political acceptability, legality and other characteristics. Any that do not meet the goals and objectives or the selection criteria identified earlier are rejected.
- * Formulate an action plan- The plan will outline a strategy for implementing the selected programs and approaches, such as staff cuts or reorganizations, or the use of facilities and equipment. The plan must include criteria for evaluating the consolidation after it has been implemented. The plan will outline every detail of the new organization and specify how each of the goals and objectives will be achieved.
- * Implement the plan- Implement in accordance with the approved procedures, budget, and schedule.
- * Monitor implementation - Monitor programs to determine whether and how closely they match intended results. If something needs changed do it.

Wilson, Robert. "Combining Departments". American Fire Journal. July 1993. Pg. 24-25

Through attrition eventually all chief officers would be remunerated under the same policy. Through attrition new lower and more efficient manning levels would be achieved. Attrition keeps demotions and layoffs to a minimum (Wilson 24-25).

Olsen, Rich. "Orange-County's successful fire department merger". Fire Chief. April 1985. Pg. 64-67.

- * Need uniform radio procedures between agencies.
- * Streamline communications system
- * Clearly spell out chain of command responsibilities
- * Merger resulted in standard response on all calls
- * The major problem was pay equity because of the differences in pay of the two departments.

Hart, B.H. Strategy. Faber&Faber Ltd., London: 1991.

Take a line of operation which offers alternative objectives

- * The surest way of gaining a superior's acceptance of a new idea is to persuade him that it is his idea!
- * The aim is to waken resistance before attempting to overcome it.
- * True conclusions can only be reached, or approached, by pursuing the truth without regarding to where it may lead or what its effect may be on different interests.
- * Looking back on the stages by which various fresh ideas gained acceptance, it can be seen that the process was eased when they could be presented, not as something radically new, but as the revival in modern terms of a time-honored principle or practice that had been forgotten.

Haney, Paul. "A feasibility study of public fire service consolidation for the southwest council of governments". National Fire Academy. October 1998.

Each department or region had different experiences with consolidation efforts due to numerous factors (Haney 3).

The fire chiefs were generally in favor of regional consolidation of operations and planning, while the mayors were by and

large ambivalent to the concept (Haney 3).

The goal of the fire service should be to safely provide the maximum amount of service to the population served at the lowest possible cost (Haney 5).

Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) created a systematic approach to incident responses that require more equipment and/or manpower than an individual City can must on its own (Haney 8).

Thanks to better codes, education, and technology demand for fire suppression is generally leveling off or falling (Haney 9).

Bruegman - Chief of Hoffman Estates Fire Department - did some fire consolidation work

Due to consolidation jealousies between departments decreased (Haney 10).

Fire Departments have a variety of different values and many departments are not standardized in their approach to their purpose. However, due to the importance of saving lives and protecting property, a common denominator is created in their main occupation. This purpose can be used to help combine two individual fire departments into one consolidated department (Haney 10).

Why consolidation's time has come: (Haney 13).

- * Cost of utilization of technology, such as computer services, radio transmission, and laboratory services are very high
- * Technology has the capacity to serve extremely wide areas and very large numbers of people

I don't think consolidation or regionalization necessarily reduces public fire protection costs. What it can do is insulate certain practices from the rigors of local review. By regionalizing, one can easily remove the service from closer inspection of citizens and insulate it from pressure to improve or cut the cost of service (Haney 13-14).

Benefits of consolidation: (Haney 14-15).

- * Dedicated mechanic position
- * Higher staffing levels
- * Ability to spread administrative issues among officers
- * More financial control along with improvements of operations.

Negative aspects of consolidations: (Haney 15).

- * Decentralization of influence
- * Visibility of operations
- * Potential labor problems
- * Mixing apparatus and equipment

Standardized vehicle make and design in consolidated department allowed bulk purchase parts in larger lots for a generally more efficient operation (Haney 15).

Chiefs felt master planning for fire protection would be easier should regional consolidation occur (Haney 18).

The majority of chiefs felt that morale of their respective organizations would benefit from a consolidation effort. Most mayors felt that the morale of their departments would be adversely affected. In the literature review there was a perception on the part of some sources that opportunities for career advancement would increase. These sources also felt that department training would be improved due to standardization, and that firefighter safety would be enhanced by improved coordination of scene accountability (Haney 20).

The fire service has expanded beyond its traditional role of fire suppression by increasing the number of services provided, but this has generated workload for departments (Haney 21).

National Fire Protection Association Standard 1500 established the standard for two personnel fully equipped and available to act as a rapid intervention team for personnel inside a burning structure or other incident (Haney 22).

Federal mandates increased staffing level requirements for fire departments across the country when OSHA implemented the 2 in, 2 out rule (Haney 22).

Multi agency personnel accountability can be difficult to establish and maintain during what can be a very active and hectic incident. A regional consolidation would ease the problem as a single system would be put in place for all personnel on the scene (Haney 22).

ISO ratings must be taken into account and credit is given for possession of a ladder truck without regard for the number of times it is used. ISO requires that every protected area must have a ladder or service company response, and if any protected area is beyond 2 1/2 miles of an existing ladder/service company, then additional ladder/service companies may be needed. Whether a ladder or service company is needed depends on the type of area protected. Response areas with five or more building three stories or thirty-five feet or more in height, or with five building that have a Needed Fire Flow exceeding 3,500 g.p.m., or any combination of the two, should have a ladder company. All buildings, including those with sprinklers, are considered when the assessment of building heights is performed (Haney 24).

Consolidation should be implemented in three phases: (Haney 25-26).

- * Appoint a committee of fire officials from the affected cities to determine the needs of their departments and the effects consolidation would have on them. A report would be generated by the committee and used as a basis for the second phase.

- * Appoint a committee consisting of fire officials, elected officials, and stakeholders from the community to evaluate the first committee's report and determine the feasibility of taking action towards consolidation. If the second committee's report is favorable to consolidation a strategic planning and implementation committee would be appointed to assist in the transformational change and formation of a consolidated agency (Haney 26).

It is recommended that a change management model be implemented when dealing with a transformation (Haney 26).

Ross, Renn. "Operational Consolidation of the Boise City Fire Department, Cole-Collister Fire District and Whitney Fire District". National Fire Academy. July 1991.

State codes providing for revenue and taxation were often the driving force for determining jurisdictional boundaries, rather

than service delivery (Ross 2).

Increases in fire service resources were not planned for, but followed development (Ross 2).

Sharing boundaries, that having been aligned by tax laws, defied the concept of closest resource service delivery (Ross 2).

Mutual Aid Agreements were developed to allow the exchange of resources, but only on a "as requested basis". Automatic Aid agreements followed, but have been driven by taxation laws and governmental unit laws. Current automatic aid agreements are driven first as an alternative to annexation, secondly as a subsidization of Fire Districts, and only third as a means of improving service delivery (Ross 2).

Compatibility has resulted from reliance upon nationally accepted standards (National Fire Protection Association Standards) as well as the local Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid agreements (Ross 8).

The operational aspects of any type of consolidation are perhaps the easiest hurdles to overcome. This is partly due to the experience that Mutual Aid and Automatic Agreements have been given to all agencies working together. Differences in S.O.P.'s, radio systems, communication procedures, and incident management have already been erased (Ross 11).

Dalbey, Steven. "Consolidation/Merger Feasibility Study for Muscatine and Fruitland Fire Departments". National Fire Academy. December 1996.

Research Questions: (Dalbey 6).

- * What types of consolidation are there which are applicable to the situation in X?
- * What are the legal implications of any of the different types of consolidation?
- * What type of consolidation would best address the problem of reduced revenues for the X Fire Department?
- * What are the potential outcomes of a consolidation involving the X Fire Department and X Fire District and/or X Fire Department?
- * What issues must be addressed in order to implement a consolidation study of the two departments?
- * Will the members of the respective Fire agencies support the pursuit of a consolidation study?

The final consolidation model comprises nine steps: (Dalbey 10).

* Determining feasibility

A. Determine needs/options

B. Determine challenges/problems

C. Determine advantages/negative aspects

D. Determine cost advantages/cost increases

E. Identify areas of duplication

F. Agree to study

- * Forming and activating an advisory group
- * Identifying key needs, issues, requirements and constraints
- * Developing goals and objectives
- * Establishing criteria for selecting programs and approaches
- * Develop and analyze alternative programs and approaches
- * Formulating an action plan
- * Implementing the plan
- * Monitoring implementation

In the event of a consolidation or merger, ISO would need to come to reevaluate their rating of the involved territory. There may be some distant portions of the territory whose ISO rating would not change if there were no substantive change in the response patterns of the new fire service (Dalbey 13).

Insurance rates vary from company to company, and the ISO impact cannot be accurately estimated unless they come and actually do a survey. The real monetary impact can only be generalized until after a consolidation occurs and ISO conducts a new fire suppression rate survey, in addition to the imposition of any new tax rates on the residents in particular areas (Dalbey 17).

Wylie, Robert. "The Development of a public opinion survey to study the feasibility of functional consolidation between the St. Peters Fire Protection District and the St. Charles Fire Protection District". National Fire Academy. January 1997

An obvious glaring challenge for consolidation was the disparity of tax rates between the two districts. The Missouri statute that governs the formation of fire protection districts also governs the consolidation of fire districts (Wylie 5).

Because of the disparity of tax rates between the two districts a tax rate for the lower taxing district would be needed. The public would have to vote and approve the tax raise. Therefore further consolidation study did not make sense until public opinion was gathered to see if there was support for the idea (Wylie 6).

Frazier, Gary. "A solution for increased efficiency and service consolidation". National Fire Academy. March 1998.

Feasibility for consolidation or merger: (Frazier 1).

- * What factors effect each governing body and their respective fire departments that prompts the need to explore consolidation and what success have other departments had who have faced similar issues?

- * What are the projected benefits that can be expected if a consolidation between the two fire departments occurs and is there a financial cost savings by a joint department?
- * What legal avenues are available in X for merging a City Fire Department and Fire Districts that will offer satisfactory results for both governing bodies?
- * What are the operational and personnel issues between two departments that need addressed in order to facilitate a merger?
- * What other factors will play either a positive or negative role in a merger or consolidation between the two fire departments?

Past indifferences, lack of trust, and control issues must be put aside by all involved persons and organizations and must look to the future to what is best for the citizens (Frazier 2).

Look at the number of stations, square miles, population, budget, call volume, form of government, revenue sources (Frazier 2).

Both governing bodies would want to assure citizens that their needs will be met and that somebody responsible would be in charge. It was suggested that this could be accomplished by either of the statutes of intergovernmental cooperation by designating one of the governing bodies as the entity in charge of managing the consolidated functions, or delegating administrative responsibility to a separate legal entity or a joint board comprised of representatives from both governing bodies (Frazier 6).

Issue of the Tax Lid for the fire district were addressed. Several methods for maintaining a equitable taxing system were discussed as well as how to oversee the merged departments (Frazier 8).

Although factual information was released by the joint committee to keep employees informed, a lot of speculation and incorrect information arose (Frazier 8).

Concerns by the county residents and employees seemed to deal with a distrust toward government, loss of control of tax dollars, and loss of identity their Fire Department (Frazier 8).

The most apparent difficulty in making change is the resistance that results which is often the result of the culture of the organization, according to Dr. Robert Moss Kanter (Frazier 9).

Catalysts for change: (Frazier 10).

- * Growth in demand for service, especially ambulance and rescue services
- * Municipal budget constraints and/or contractual labor demands
- * Pressure to improve the productive use of paid firefighter "downtime"
- * The complexity of modern firefighting and the length of training volunteers required to meet community fire-safety standards.
- * Economies of scale

ISO ratings and resulting insurance premiums are based on several factors, but a key ingredient is the availability of a water

supply within 1000 feet (Frazier 14).

Can either department manage multi incidents and still offer adequate coverage? (Frazier 15).

Even though there are separate agencies operating during an emergency, they must operate as one organization with consistent personnel levels, operating guidelines, and training, for personnel safety and effectiveness of the emergency operation (Frazier 15).

Even if there are no cost savings, it is still the most efficient way to provide fire management for both cities (Frazier 17).

Quality and efficiency allows departments to capture the long term benefits (Frazier 18).

With the realigning of stations there will be one less station to maintain allowing revenue for the building of new stations (Frazier 19).

Several upper management positions were eliminated by attrition allowing for cost savings and allowing for an increase of firefighter/medic positions (Frazier 20).

Although the benefits of a suggested consolidation or merger are not proven, they represent an educated guess based on current information (Frazier 20).

Full impact from the consolidation/merger will not be realized until, through attrition, positions become vacant (Frazier 20).

Startup costs include: station remodeling, consolidating paging systems, upgrading communication systems which may be partially funded by the Will County 911 tax fund (Frazier 21).

Blended the retirement rate for the consolidated agencies (Frazier 21).

Savings on employee benefits (Frazier 21).

Benefits: (Frazier 21).

- * Increase immediate response and resource capabilities
- * Better strategic location of stations
- * Standardization of department training
- * Operational guidelines
- * Inspection/Investigation
- * Specialty teams resulting in better efficiency
- * ISO ratings
- * Increased safety of personnel
- * Overall less duplication of resources

The extra resources immediately available would not only increase the chances of survival for a victim of an incident, but would also allow an increased level of inspection/investigation, and maintenance program between the two departments as a result of a merger, should result in greater efficiency of operations and a more uniform and effective fire/rescue service (Frazier 22).

An interlocal agreement is most widely used for consolidation. The agreement preserves pension plans and other employee benefits, unifies collective bargaining units, and establishes equitable funding methods. It outlines the governance of the authority, terms, powers, organization, and financial policies (Frazier 25).

Departments who have previously entered into mutual aid agreements should have less problems and a less transition of change than those departments who have not had a working relationship (Frazier 26).

Operational issues that need addressed may involve areas such as station location and manpower, standard operating procedures, rules and regulations, response guidelines, communication system, promotional and hiring practices, equitable rank and manpower issues, mutual aid agreements, standardization of equipment and testing, health and safety standards, uniform training standards, uniform code enforcement, a transition period where changes that effect the organization's employee's effectiveness are minimized as much as possible (Frazier 26).

Do both agencies pay FICA tax?

The attitude that we can do it better needs to be given up, because the attitude can only go so far on limited dollars. Barriers such as these must be discussed and broken down before efforts dealing with a consolidation can progress (Frazier 30).

Why change may fail: (Frazier 31).

- * Not establishing a great enough sense of urgency
- * Not creating a powerful enough guiding coalition
- * Lacking a vision
- * Under communicating the vision
- * Not removing obstacles to the new vision
- * Not systematically planning for and creating short-term wins
- * Declaring victory too soon
- * Not anchoring changes in the organization's culture

The key issues that need to be addressed by both governing bodies that will take effort and trust, is with "control". The issues of who will oversee the control of the department, how will a board be made up, and what agreement can be reached by leaders to manage equity and control of the taxing authority needs to be answered (Frazier 32).

McGrath, Tim. "Attitudes of fire chiefs and public officials toward consolidation of the fire protection in Lake County, X". Walden University. November 1995.

Consolidation experiences are principally individual, and it is cautioned that one should not draw conclusions from any particular case (McGrath 15).

Movements toward consolidation are usually motivated by economic need rather than a desire for efficiency. Modification in the practice and structure of local government normally results not from the consideration in logic but from the demonstration of need (McGrath 18).

In regions experiencing rapid growth, it eliminates the problems of either overlapping services or nor services at all, and allows for easier fire protection master planning (McGrath 29).

Proponents of consolidation suggest that a significant advantage is the elimination of political tampering (McGrath 29).

An advantage often overlooked is the future cost avoidance communities might realize due to their ability to handle increased service demands as a result of their consolidation (McGrath 29).

Consolidation: (McGrath 30).

- * It appeals to those who philosophically believe that less government is better;
- * change can be made in the name of the merge;
- * it creates greater political clout;
- * it increases the ability to absorb financial crisis;
- * it increases the ability to comply with mandates;
- * it allows funding for specialty team needs

In theory, consolidation offers advantages of savings through economies of scale, but larger sized in and of itself will not ensure greater efficiency and political impediments constrain the adoption of structural reform (McGrath 31).

The critical issue looming for the fire service is not so much the funding system, but rather the demand from the ever expanding need for services. Diminishing resources, coupled with increasing state and federal mandates, increasing public demands for accountability and justification of traditional programs, expanding needs for services, and new demands such as carbon monoxide detector response have challenged fire service administrators to find new solutions to these challenges. The problem is exacerbated by the fire service's traditional willingness to assume responsibility for these new demands without consideration to budgetary restraints or long-term consequences. (McGrath 32-33).

Opposition usually falls into the following categories: (McGrath 35)

- * Individual who agree with the concept
- * Individuals who are uninformed
- * Individuals who resist change in general
- * Individuals who feel they will be adversely effected by change

Significant reasons for failure are: (McGrath 35)

- * Insufficient communication of goals, benefits, and impacts of regionalization
- * Fear of employees loss of employment, pay, or benefits
- * The community's difference in equipment
- * Career and volunteer employee merge
- * Hidden agendas
- * Politics
- * Standardization of rules
- * Policies and programs
- * Departments being too far geographically separated
- * Selecting key staff of the new organization
- * Inequitable sharing of costs
- * Employee morale
- * Less sense of accountability in large organizations

The role of the chiefs of the involved departments is the ultimate keystone (McGrath 35).

Most citizens who support consolidation will only do so if there is no rise of increase in taxes (McGrath 36).

Those who opposed consolidation on more pragmatic grounds argued that larger governments are not only more impersonal and less responsive to their citizens, but that the efficiency gains from consolidation are more theoretical than real (McGrath 36).

When politicians have spoken to me I said to them not to make the claim that it's going to save money. It probably won't, but you are going to have better government (McGrath 37).

How does one know if a fire department is good? Accreditation Evaluation System (McGrath 38).

Most chiefs that support consolidation efforts do so not for the perceived financial benefits, but rather for the improvement of critical services (McGrath 39).

Some public officials feel that they are giving up local prerogatives when they agree to cooperate with another jurisdiction; this is particularly true when the service is relatively controversial and unstandardized (McGrath 40).

The greater the diversity of the communities the more difficult consolidation will be. Conversely, the greater the experience with interlocal government cooperation among communities, the more successful will consolidation efforts will be (McGrath 41).

Legal challenges are almost a certainty in any consolidation attempt and must be considered from the onset. States that allow communities "home rule" powers often are at an advantage with options under such statute (McGrath 42).

Consolidated governments are: (McGrath 45)

- * Larger
- * More remote
- * More bureaucratic
- * Less informed
- * Less knowledgeable about local tax-service packages than those living in fragmented settings
- * Citizens are less informed about government in general
- * Citizens' dissatisfactions with services are generally higher

Smaller fragmented systems are more apt to customize their services toward citizens' desires. Fragmented systems stimulate competition among local jurisdictions to enhance citizens to seek out levels of service as a major factor in their living and working (McGrath 45).

Essential components for a successful effort: (McGrath 45)

- * High elite citizenry involvement and commitment to the consolidation efforts
- * Broad spectrum of group support for the proposal
- * The belief among the community elite that special interest dominates local government

The hypotheses that structural slack and civic dissatisfaction were strongly associated with successful campaigns received little support (McGrath 45).

If two can live more cheaply than one, why aren't my wife and I rich (McGrath 46)?

Would fire protection organizations realize cost savings if they participated in operational consolidations? Only a consolidation feasibility study would give reliable insight into the answer to that question (McGrath 46).

Citizen comments: (McGrath 49)

- * If it ain't broke, don't fix it
- * I mainly want adequate protection but do not want any more taxes imposed on X

- * I do not want taxes to go up for any kind of service or reason
- * My family has had to use X paramedics several times. They have always been prompt, polite, and very caring. I have only good to say for them.
- * I support a regional fire system coordinated under one umbrella. One efficient system with less bureaucracy
- * I think it's very important to have a strong local fire department, as well as a local rescue service
- * No new taxes! Concentrate on funding schools and advocate adequate fire protection for the cheapest cost
- * Government is too ##@\$@ big and should be reduced wherever possible

Changes in cost associated with increased jurisdiction size are a function of the parameters of the City; thus generalizations about cost savings cannot be directly applied to different Citys. More often than not, consolidation costs remain the same or even increase initially due to the elevation of the level of service (McGrath 49).

Establishing the attitude of the organization and governmental official is the critical initial step. A critical component to a successful consolidation is the commitment of the fire chiefs and public officials. If they don't want it, it won't happen (McGrath 50).

Knabel, Robert. "Public Safety: Options to Improve Service Delivery". City of Galesburg, Illinois. May 1994.

Assumption: As quality and productivity improve, product and service delivery costs will decrease (Knabel 2).

It is not just enough to recognize the pros and cons or the cost benefit of a particular alternative, but we must recognize whether it will "fit" within our environment. If it is economical and will provide a higher level of service yet the community does not support it or is willing pay a higher cost for another alternative, then that too must be taken into account (Knabel 3).

Warning trends including revenues per capita, expenditures per capita, operating deficits, and fund balances can be directly attributed to the need for attention to General Fund revenue and expenditures. We would remiss in our responsibility of fiscal oversight if we did not consider fire safety service delivery alternatives that might positively affect the financial condition of the general fund (Knabel 3).

Local government is expected to provide more and better services without increases in taxes or reductions of other governmental services. The City Board receives pressure from the departments to provide, among other things, added personnel, shorter working hours, newer equipment, and more pay with better benefits to compensate for the provision of these demanding services. It is with all of these reasons in mind that this report has been prepared to look at alternatives that may be available to the City organization to improve service delivery. This report focuses on fire consolidation issues as an alternatives to our traditional service (Knabel 4).

Anti-Consolidation: (Knabel 30)

- * Neglect of the total fire safety program
- * Increase costs
- * Lack of support from the affected departments

- * Low morale
- * Impaired career paths
- * Inadequate training
- * Loss of firefighting team concept
- * Role conflict
- * Lack of departmental planning and goal setting

The "cost is not that in terms of money but in terms of public support, the employee morale, public dissension, and dissatisfaction (Knabel 34).

If the City Board wishes us to proceed in this consolidation, considerable more study will be needed. We will need to look at our staffing, organizational structure, salaries, shift schedules, patrol levels and areas, equipment and vehicle needs, policies and procedures, dispatch, training, operations, pensions, response time, ISO rating and implementation schedule. We will need to consider whether we wish to move toward immediate or gradual implementation and we will need to consider an appropriate transition schedule. All of these will determine the dollar savings or increases service levels and the ultimate structure of the department (Knabel 34).

When residents are generally satisfied with the levels and costs of community services, the community is not a good candidate for a merger effort (Knabel 56).

Although unionized fire services with bargaining rights certainly complicate the effort, they in no way preclude a successful merger effort (Knabel 56).

Much of the local opposition to a program represents sincere concern on the part of many that services will deteriorate, and as a result, lives and property may be lost. The traditional organized opposition will use these fears to their advantage and exaggerate their potential danger. They will report the often-hear fallacies that those programs are from small towns only, for suburban communities, or as a temporary provision for newly annexed areas. They will emphasize programs that have failed (Knabel 57).

A Systematic Approach to Fire Service Consolidation and Merger ICMA. Management Information Publications. Washington, DC. Clearinghouse Report #40599

THE PROCESS (A Systematic Approach 8)

Identify the Need

Merger or consolidation will proceed only if the need has been made apparent and need begins with the governing bodies' willingness to direct their staff to begin documentation necessary. District and City Boards of tow or more entities considering functional consolidation, consolidation, or merger need to be aware of and agree that the end result may well effect them personally, even to the extent that as many as half of them may find their positions eliminated!

The political bodies need to:

- * Agree to a study, knowing that all members may not survive their present position.
- * Agree to support the study wholeheartedly in dollars and effort.
- * The Fire Chiefs must be the "Champions of the Cause". They must be wholeheartedly committed to the process and be open minded. Their security needs to be addressed by the Boards. Without the Fire Chiefs willing to support, the result will be failure.
- * Establish target dates for beginning and ending the study.
- * Agree that an unbiased study could show the need for merger of consolidation-or the opposite-and future actions should be taken based upon the results of the study, not on the desires of a particular department.

When the governing bodies agree to a study, their next step should be to direct the staffs of the departments involved to develop the following:

Identify areas of duplication that may include but not necessarily be limited to:

- * Redundant positions
- * Purchasing
- * Supply stocks
- * Training facilities
- * Communications facilities
- * Operational Overlap
- * Number of Stations and Locations
- * Number and types of apparatus

(Depending upon the size and sophistication of the departments involved, this list may be expanded considerably)

Format for Determining the Pros and Cons (A Systematic Approach 9-12)

Staff will be able to develop a list of Pros and Cons based upon their experience and knowledge of the Departments involved.

The lists presented are by no means complete. However, a comparison of this list to one you may develop should give strong indication of whether or not the departments should continue the process.

Challenges/Problems

1. Differences in wages of the departments (Can you have tow wage scales in one Department?)
2. Union Contracts (2 or more contracts will require renegotiations)
3. Retirement Systems (One Public - One Private: What is the cost of administering both?)
4. Civil Service Commissions (Need only one)
5. Merging of Administrative Staff (Loss of Status to Some)
6. Personal Feelings (Fear of change; Possible lessened production)
7. "Politics" (Internal and External)
8. Difference in Operating Policies/Procedures (Need to agree and re-write; Time and Money)
9. Name Change for Department (Legal Fees - Costs of Merger - Computer Data - Paperwork - Uniforms - Signs on buildings and apparatus - painting apparatus - stationary - etc.)
10. Travel Costs (Increased distances within district; BCs will travel longer; Chief Officers at a disadvantage for personal contact.
11. Authority and Responsibility (Need for Pre-consolidation agreements regarding who is the boss)
12. Stress (Fear of the unknown once intent is made known; Fear of loss of job status; extra workload)
13. Objections by Citys within Department Boundaries (Loss of identity and influence)
14. Standardization of equipment (Decisions needed on what? How Many? More purchases may be needed)
15. Difference in Philosophies (Concession and compromise will be needed)
16. Who is going to be Chief? (Chiefs and Elected officials need to decide!)

Advantages/Positive Aspects

1. Reduction in Costs (Attrition due to retirements, resignations)
2. Reduction in duplication of services such as:
 - A. Legal Fees
 - B. Board Expenses
 - C. Civil Service Expenses
 - D. Fire Code Appeal Board Expenses
 - E. Memos
 - F. Staff Decisions

G. Operating Procedures

H. Election Expenses

I. Training Development and Delivery

J. Purchase of Public Education materials, films, brochures, etc.

K. Accounting Systems

L. Filing Systems

M. Inventories

N. Libraries

O. Audio Visual Equipment

P. Fire Prevention Codes and Plan

Q. Reviews

R. Reduced Overtime

S. Shop Equipment and Supplies

T. Mapping

U. Radio R&M

3. Standardized Equipment

4. Better Utilization of Resources

Major Cost Advantages

1. Grant Procurement (Resource person available to work in this area)

2. HAZMAT response (Built in backup)

3. Improved ISO rating (Apparatus and manpower available to accomplish)

4. Telephone System (One system capable of service to all)

5. Dispatch Centers

6. Training (Cost effective, standardized training and facilities for all departments)

7. Cost of Negotiations (Only one negotiator needed)

8. 911 Monies (Combined for greater impact)
9. Apparatus and Equipment (Plenty in reserve when combined)
10. Bank Accounts (Increased return)
11. Public Benefits (Coordination of Codes. One set of rules for all Citys and citizens)
12. Enough people to do the job (More expertise and "brain power" available to be applied to problems and tasks)
13. Political "Clout" (Strength in size and numbers)
14. Area Growth (Ability to provide top-notch service at the same cost per thousand)
15. Ability to do things together we can't do singularly (More resources - physical and mental)
16. Better survival rate in case of tax limitation (Combined valuation and growth will be advantageous)

NEXT STEP (A Systematic Approach 15)

(The pros outweigh the cons and the governing bodies want to explore the matter further)

The governing bodies must establish their joint goal as either functional consolidation, merger, or both.

If the politicians cannot agree, then the time is not right and we should cease further exploration of the possibilities. At this point the costs of exploration are minimal. From here forward, a great deal of time and effort is necessary.

The Decision to move ahead having been made, the next steps are:

1. Establish dates, times, and places for combined staff meetings, at which the responsibility will be place for development of plans of action which will make the consolidation and/or merger successful.
2. Make Task Force assignments for all major Department functions
3. Establish a target date for completion of plans (Allow enough time)
4. Establish Review Dates
5. Collate all information, review, refine and prepare document for presentation to governing bodies.

Task Force Responsibilities

The goals for each task force might include:

- * Reduction of operating costs of all agencies involved.
- * Elimination of duplication of coverage, services and personnel.

* Exploring alternative methods of providing service and programs.

ONCE MERGED TO THE FOLLOWING (A Systematic Approach 46)

1. Transfer line employees to new locations as soon as possible! To the employee, this a terribly traumatic occasion. It also is the quickest way possible to alleviate fears of change. The longer the integration of the work forces is put off, the more resistance will be formed. The stronger the resistance, the more likelihood that personnel will go to their new assignment kicking, screaming and dragging their feet. It is amazing to see their comfort level return after a very short time in a new location.
2. Stick by the actions taken to date. If at all possible, keep on the track laid out by the task force reports. Until proven flawed or defective. These reports are your Master Plan, or plans of action for the immediate future.
3. Assist employees who may feel that they have lost "status" through the change. There is a lot of meaningful work available to the surplus people you may find on your payroll. The use of functional titles rather than traditional titles implying a formal hierarchy, i.e., deputy chief, assistant chief, division chief will probably reduce tension and hard feelings.
4. Staff meetings and information exchange with all employees is important. Keep them informed of their accomplishments, what they helped to build that is better than they had before.
5. Change the name of the new organization. Expensive! Yes. Worthwhile? Absolutely. You have the opportunity for a "fresh start". Don't pass up any chance to rid yourselves of hampering traditions. You can make changes that will truly reflect progress. This helps to get rid of the skeletons in the old closets. Most of all, be positive. Have faith in your employees' capabilities. Give them all the praise they deserve for helping you build the finest fire department. Watch out for the possibility of a "Name Identity" problem with the new name. Make sure you market the new name and organization to the public.

"Report from the Blue Ribbon Panel on Intergovernmental Agreements to the Northeastern X Planning Commission". March 1994.

Illinois ranks first in the nation in the number of local governments (Report from the Blue Ribbon 4).

Illinois ranks ninth in the nation in property taxes and first in the Midwest in sales taxes. Thus intergovernmental competition for revenue in the form of new land development often precludes cooperation (Report from the Blue Ribbon 4).

Illinois annexation law which, in comparison to the laws of other states, grants greater bargaining power to property owners in determining the timing of development and the related zoning and development standards to be applied. Due to the leverage afforded private owners (and municipalities which are not required to annex), negotiated pre-annexation agreements are more commonly employed in X than any other state. Municipalities competing for new development feel pressure to keep their development standards competitive (Report from the Blue Ribbon 4).

Irregular and overlapping boundary configurations are a frequent byproduct of competition for tax revenues coupled with weak annexation laws. Intergovernmental agreements are more complicated to achieve when jurisdictional boundaries are not in accord (Report from the Blue Ribbon 4).

Non-home rule municipalities are at a disadvantage with their home rule neighbors in competing for growth and in negotiating inter-governmental agreements. Special districts can be greatly affected by local land use decisions over which they have no control (Report from the Blue Ribbon 7).

Property Assessments.

It is important for you to understand what the Assessed Valuation of your property means because you will receive documents from Assessing officials and other governmental officials referring to the Assessed Valuation of your home. Real estate taxes are figured by other government agencies on the basis of the Assessed Valuation of your property.

To help you understand Assessed Valuation, consider this Example: If you own a home you think you could sell for \$60,000. The Assessed Valuation would be 33 1/3% (statutory level of assessments in X) of the Market Value, which is \$20,000 ($60,000 \times 33 \frac{1}{3}\% = 20,000$)

Computing Your Taxbill

By following this step-by-step example, you will be able to compute your property taxbill. In this example, we use a home with an Assessed Value of \$20,000, the 1995 State Factor, along with the Average Tax Rate for properties in Will County.

Step 1: Find the Equalized Assessed Valuation of your home by multiplying the Assessed Valuation (found on the Supervisor of Assessment's "Assessment Revision" card, the Board of Review card notifying you of their decision, or last year's taxbill) times the State Factor. (Example: $20,000 \times 1.0000 = 20,000$)

Step 2: Find the Taxable Valuation for your home by subtracting the General Homestead Exemption and/or the Senior Citizen Exemption and/or the Senior Citizen Assessment Freeze Exemption (if applicable). To figure the General Homestead Exemption, you need to know your 1977 Equalized Assessed Valuation (for this example we will use the 1977 figure of 17,100 -- any increase up to \$3,500 is subtracted). (Example: $20,000 - 2,900 = 17,100$)

Step 3: Find the taxes on your home by multiplying the Taxable Valuation times (Example: $17,200 \times 6.5518 = \$1,1200.36$)

Cohen, Steven and William Eimicke. Tools for Innovators. Jossey-Bass Publishers. San Francisco: 1998.

A strategy consists of seven general elements: (Cohen 20)

1. Problem and opportunity analysis
2. Identification and analysis of players
3. Historical analysis
4. Organizational and situational analysis
5. Concrete strategy formulation
6. Pre-implementation projection
7. Evaluation and midcourse correction

The original concept of reengineering was based on seven principles: (Cohen 31)

1. Organize around outcomes, not tasks
2. Have those who use the output perform the process
3. Subsume information processing into real work
4. Treat geographically dispersed resources as centralized
5. Link parallel activities
6. Move decision to the point of work and build control into the process
7. Capture information only once at the source

Without reengineering, organizations are doomed to focus on task improvement when their real problems (and opportunities for improvement) are in their organizationwide processes (Cohen 33).

Successful reengineering projects in the public sector usually result in the creation of an entirely new agency (Cohen 34).

(Cohen 40-41).

1. Mandate change
2. Hire a consultant
3. Assemble the reengineering team
4. Recognize, name, and understand the existing processes
5. Ensure that all members know the processes and their importance
6. Measure the processes
7. Invent the new processes
8. Construct the new processes
9. Sell the new processes
10. Strive for ongoing process improvement

(Cohen 42)

1. Map the process as it currently exists
2. Start at the end and work backward
3. Reach for the stars (but keep your feet on the ground)

4. Begin with a clean sheet

Teams pool knowledge, experience, skills, and perspectives. They facilitate brainstorming, encourage creativity, and are better able to handle cross-functional assignments. Teams seem to cope better with rapid change, short response times, and uncertainty (Cohen 80).

Hall, Lavinia. Negotiation: Strategies for Mutual Gain. Sage Publications. Newbury Park: 1993.

Conflicts, managed well, can provide the impetus for growth, constructive change, and mutual benefits (Hall Viii).

Spend time initially to develop a process for addressing the problems that need to be resolved, rather than jumping to solutions too early (Hall 2).

Parties often do not reach an agreement when agreements are possible or they might reach an agreement that is jointly inferior. Essentially they do not know how to exploit their differences effectively and end up by splitting a small pie rather than constructively creating and sharing a much larger pie (Hall 16).

In a contingent contract, each party agrees to pay a certain sum, with the stipulation that depending on what happens in the future, more or less money will be paid (Hall 24).

Identify all the key stakeholders and include them in the planning process from the beginning. The key stakeholders themselves determine whether there is a problem and whether they want to work collaboratively to solve it. If so, they work together, step by step, through the planning phase, continually checking back with their constituencies. The participants first work for agreement on the definition of the issues and then go on to solutions. It is important that this process continues through the implementation phase (Hall 33).

Set certain ground rules; I would clarify my constraints and the options with which I could not live (Hall 34).

People need to be reminded that their solution will not be effective unless they can gain the approval of the ultimate decision making authority (Hall 34).

The success of a collaborative planning process depends on clarifying and legitimizing interests and reaching consensus on the definition and root causes of a problem before moving on to solutions (Hall 36).

Collaborative planning process: (Hall 36).

1. Process design
2. Task force startup and education
3. Problem definition and analysis
4. Alternative solutions
5. Evaluation
6. Decision making

7. Implementation

It is important to find ways to involve people who want to join after the process has begun (Hall 36).

To get parties to agree on a set of more realistic numbers, we had to develop a joint fact-finding process that allowed them to pool information and build a new model to forecast costs under various design and financial assumptions. We drafted procedural protocols, agreed to an agenda of issues and a timetable, and then proceeded with joint fact-finding. After the fact-finding, we began the process of inventing options. We did this by holding confidential meetings with each party in which they told us the issues most important to them and the ones on which they could compromise (Hall 74).

The purpose of the unions in the traditional system is to take wages out of competition so that firms do not compete against one another to get lower wage rates. On the workplace level, the dominant theme has been job control with grievance systems culminating in arbitration (Hall 78).

Employment security is a strategy used by employers. The employer justifies asking for lower wages and reduced fringe benefits by giving job assurances (Hall 82).

Grandfather the incumbents by creating a two-tier wage system, with new employees being hired at market rates. "We are not only going to keep your current wages, we are going to increase them and give you job security. What we want in return is the ability to hire new people at lower pay scales, the market rates." The rationale is to say, "The people who are coming in at higher wages are still getting paid more than you were before (Hall 82).

Mutual Gains bargaining: (Hall 87)

1. They began with agreements in principle to see creative solutions rather than positional compromises
2. They developed, from the start, shared ground rules different from those of traditional bargaining
3. They avoided taking early positions while exploring the facts; in several cases the parties found that long cherished "principles" were at odds with their true long-run purposes
4. They shared information to an unprecedented degree
5. They took the time to thoroughly explore each other's real interests
6. And they made space for creative intervention by agreeing that ideas proposed in the committee would not be treated as fixed commitments.

Be firm on goals but flexible on means. (Hall 136).

Search for face-saving arrangements. People are much more likely to move toward settlement if arrangements can be found that make it possible for concessions to be made without losing face. (Hall 137)

Contact with the other side, communication, momentum toward peace, creating superordinate goals, flexibility, changing the immediate setting, and face saving can all be used to direct parties toward problem solving (Hall 137).

Outcomes are concrete, specific, measurable, and quantifiable.

Cooperative Objectives: (Hall 159)

1. Conduct self ethically
2. Maximize settlement
3. Get a fair settlement

Cooperative Traits: (Hall 159)

1. Trustworthy, Ethical, Fair
2. Courteous, Personable, Tactful, sincere
3. Fair minded
4. Realistic opening position
5. Does not use threats
6. Willing to share information
7. Probes opponents position

Hermann, Margaret. Resolving Conflict: Strategies for Local Government. ICMA. Washington D.C.: 1994

Public sector collaboration is a voluntary, strategic alliance of organizations to enhance each other's capacity to achieve a common purpose by sharing risks, responsibilities, resources, and rewards (Hermann 28).

Credibility with and access to neighborhood residents ought to be as important as - if not more important than - financial contributions (Hermann 28).

Sharing rewards must be regarded as another key element of successful collaboration. This means that no single organization can take credit for accomplishments because publicity about the collaborative's work acknowledges all partners (Hermann 28).

1. Understand and respond to cultural differences in values and methods of communication, and the tension between exclusivity and inclusivity
 2. Provide opportunities for effective small group interaction, conflict resolution, and group problem-solving
 3. Discuss, assess, and act upon common viewpoints about the larger political, economic, and social cultural context in which the collaboration takes place
 4. Emphasize the contributions that the collaboration can make in encouraging democratic practices within and among organizations and in changing values in the larger society (Hermann 28).
1. Discuss assumptions, beliefs, and values

2. Assess trends
3. Link priority issues or problems with opportunities
4. Clarify the community's purpose and vision for collaboration
5. Formalize collaboration
6. Establish governance and administration
7. Ensure shared power
8. Offer contributions and overcome barriers
9. Formulate goals
10. Link goals and objectives to action plans
11. Implement plans and secure staffing
12. Evaluate the collaborative

Ground rules for effective groups: (Hermann 96-100)

1. Share all relevant information
2. Be specific - use examples
3. Explain the reasons behind your statements, questions, and actions
4. Focus on interests, not positions
5. Keep the discussion focused
6. Don't take cheap shots or otherwise distract the group
7. It is all right to disagree openly with any member of the group
8. It is all right to discuss undiscussable issues
9. Agree on what words and different terminology means

Consider other things and choose a strategy (Hermann 178)

I. Time and cost Issues

A. What is at stake? (Money? A little of a lot?)

B. How important is it that something be done now?

C. What are the relative costs of each strategy?

D. Are the resources (time, money, skills, leadership) available to pursue the strategy?

II. Power issues

A. What historical, legal, or administrative factors are at play?

B. What are the sources of available power, and what kinds of power are available (e.g., knowledge, resources, influence, position)?

C. What are the external alliances or pressures that may come into play?

D. Is power balanced or imbalanced? Are there likely shifts in the power balance or alliances?

E. How is power now being used?

III. What are the available alternative? What's the worst thing or best thing that can happen?

IV. Relationship Issues

A. Is this an ongoing relationship that will be important in the future?

B. What is the current level of trust between the parties?

C. How is the issue affecting others in the organization

V. Are there compatible or interdependent interests?

VI. Is precedent setting an issue?

VII. Will the parties agree to start the process?

VIII. What degree of control do the parties have to implement a solution?

IX. What are some other likely future results?

Don't Confuse (Hermann 181)

1. Slogans with visions

2. Visions with plans

3. Plans with programs

4. Programs with results

5. Results with completion; or

6. Training with capability

an atmosphere constrained by "Dillon's Law". Judge Dillon, the 19th-century jurist who enunciated the "creature theory", held that local governments were creatures of the state and, in effect, could only exercise those powers specifically granted by law or the constitution, or those that could be inferred (Intergovernmental Cooperation 5).

The 1970 Illinois Constitution permits local governments to contract and associate among themselves, the State, other states, individuals, associations and corporations in manners not prohibited by law or ordinance (Intergovernmental Cooperation 6).

Article VII, section 10 of the X Constitution provides that "...local government or school districts may contract or otherwise associate themselves with the state, other states and their units of local government, with school districts, and with the United States to obtain or share services and to exercise, combine or transfer any power or function in any manner not prohibited by law or ordinance(Intergovernmental Cooperation 6)."

Attorneys General have consistently ruled that a local government may not enlarge its powers through intergovernmental cooperation. The reasoning is that it does not make sense for a government, created for one purpose, to take on a whole new range of duties by virtue of an intergovernmental agreement. Thus one would not expect a fire protection district, for example, to add garbage disposal to its range of services (Intergovernmental Cooperation 6-7).

Management Policies in Local Government Finance. "User Charges and Special Districts" (chapter). ICMA. Washington DC: 1996.

Special districts look after their own interests, have no competition, and therefore raise taxes for the public.

With user-charges price has two principal functions: to ration government supplied goods - protect against wasteful consumption; to let residents decide whether the value they place on the service is in proportion to what they are paying for it (Management Policies in Local 259).

The Census Bureau defines special districts as limited-purpose governmental units that exist as separate corporate entities and, theoretically, have fiscal and administrative independence from general purpose governments. Fiscal independence suggests that a special district may determine its budget and issue debt without review by other local officials or governments; levy taxes for its own support; and collect charges for its services. Administrative independence, according to the Census Bureau, means that a public agency has a popularly elected governing body that represents two or more state or local governments and performs function that are essentially different from those of its creating governments. (Because school districts are unique, this discussion only concerns other types of special districts) (Management Policies in Local 278).

Most special districts in metropolitan areas have the right to levy user charges, and they often have significant property taxing powers as well. The property tax is the only form of general tax levied by special districts (Management Policies in Local 279).

One of the features that distinguishes special districts from other governmental entities is their heavy use of pricing mechanisms (e.g., user fees, charges, and special assessments) (Management Policies in Local 279).

Special assessments (a form of user fee) are similar in function and economic impact to fiscal impact fees in that the areas served by the new facilities are required to pay the cost of any needed improvements (Management Policies in Local 276).

The primary disadvantage of the user charge are its regressive nature and its administrative costs. A marginal-cost user charge is likely to be regressive when compared with property tax (Management Policies in Local 283-84).

User charges - human nature - people don't like paying taxes in big lump sums such as property tax; they prefer paying little chunks at a time even if it ends up being more. It is politically more popular to nickel and dime people than to get a chunk all at once.

Bowers, James and Wilbur Rich. Governing Middle-Sized Cities: Studies in Mayoral Leadership. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. Boulder: 2000.

Leadership that facilitates intergovernmental cooperation in our region through optimistic and rational approach emphasizing mutually beneficial policy outcomes over political considerations (Bowers 49).

Because local jurisdictions are creatures of state government, efforts to create metropolitan government structures depend on decision made at the state level. In many states, annexation or consolidation requires voter approval in each affected jurisdiction; similarly, the establishment of a metropolitan authority with the power to tax members or directly shape development often requires state enabling legislation (Bowers 51).

The context in which cooperation is possible identifies specific conditions that may help to facilitate cooperation in policy. It is suggested that parties engaged in debate must be interdependent and that the factions must have "both complementary and conflicting interests (Bowers 52)."

Where deep concessions are required to reach agreement, cooperation will be more difficult. Similarly, the magnitude of potential joint gain will affect cooperation: the greater the potential gain, the more likely cooperation becomes (Bowers 53).

Specific leadership roles are identified as especially relevant to cooperative outcomes. These include facilitation communication to reduce transaction costs, improving proposed alternatives to increase the benefits of agreement, withholding support to deter conflictual strategies, and discouraging premature public commitments to reduce the risk of breakdown (Bowers 53).

Leadership roles for mayors include setting goals, promoting City's interest, educating others, advocating for particular outcomes and linking others by organizing relationships and serving as a liaison or team leader (Bowers 54).

Institutional or structural opportunities for engagement must exist or be created (Bowers 54).

The first thing you have to do, before you get to such interesting things as intergovernmental cooperation, is get your own house in order (Bowers 57-8).

The group's aim is to cooperatively advocate, plan for, and coordinate the provision of services and investments which have a positive environmental, economic, and social impact (Bowers 59).

Simple inertial and fear of municipal employee layoffs may be obstacles; these may be mitigated by education and advocacy, in the former case, and a six- to eight-year phase-in period in the latter (Bowers 63).

Regional cooperation is politically fragile and best promoted by positive incentives and a long-term perspective. Cooperation generally occurs where autonomy is not threatened and where direct fiscal benefit may be derived. In addition, metropolitan regions are complex and individual; to understand the specific factors that inhibit or encourage cooperation, a given region must be assessed as a unique case (Bowers 63).

Gargan, John. Handbook of Local Government Administration. Marcel Dekker, Inc. New York: 1997.

Reform of metropolitan fragmentation would: (Gargan 141)

1. Provide a base for planned, coordinated, and financed service delivery

2. Improve service efficiency and effectiveness
3. Reduce service disparities among localities
4. Promote area-wide problem solving
5. Reduce fiscal disparities among localities
6. Create a mechanism to enhance area-wide leadership
7. Excessive fragmentation immobilizes local decision making which invites unwanted state and federal intrusion

If taxpayers become dissatisfied, they can search out alternatives and relocate (Gargan 142).

Competition among local entities may lead to more efficient and responsive public services (Gargan 142).

If the responsibility for service delivery is divided, policy makers are more helpless to respond to public demands (Gargan 143).

A regional council is a voluntary association of governments that represents the entire area's interests, plus coordinates a variety of local and regional plans, resources, services, and programs. Regional councils are not governments - they have no governmental powers (Gargan 420).

Special districts are generally defined as independent local governments that perform either only one function or (less commonly) a few functions (Gargan 438).

Typically special districts can levy and collect taxes and provide services, but are not directly accountable to other government agencies (Gargan 438).

Of all special districts, only about one-fourth have boundaries that are coterminous with a general-purpose local government (U.S. Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, 1993). (Gargan 438).

Nonenterprise districts provide services that tend to benefit an entire area on a non-fee basis. Services such as fire protection, that benefit an entire community are usually provided by Nonenterprise districts. Nonenterprise districts are typically funded by tax revenues (Gargan 441).

The ten states with the most districts (X, California, Texas, Pennsylvania, Kansas, Missouri, Colorado, Washington, Nebraska, and New York) account for approximately 55% of the national total (Gargan 442).

The classic rationale for use of special districts is to overcome geographic limitations of existing units of governments. Frequently, service needs and policy issues extend across the borders of cities and counties (Gargan 445).

The special district can provide urban services to residents of unincorporated areas as well as the municipality. It can serve a number of units of local government that can share the services but remain independent (Gargan 445).

Population growth, particularly in traditionally non-urban areas, creates demands for the types of services that special districts typically provide, such as sewerage, fire protection, and flood control. When such services are not offered on a scale satisfactory to existing governments and/or citizens, special districts are frequently formed (Gargan 445).

Tax and/or debt limitation in the charters of local governments, frequently imposed by state legislatures, have historically tended to encourage the creation of special districts. The special districts are able to circumvent these restrictions since they are often created with separate borrowing and taxing powers...they are also often able to finance through service charges rather than rely only on property taxes (Gargan 446).

Special district expenditures are often strongly correlated with per capita expenditures of other local governments (Gargan 446).

When local governments are unable to establish differential tax rates, a new special district may be empowered to do so, thereby linking new services to specific areas of a larger jurisdiction. According to the U.S. Advisory Committee for Intergovernmental Relations more than 2,700 districts were formed in X during the years from 1870 to 1970 for this reason (Gargan 446).

The path of least resistance - Rather than changing the boundaries or form of local units of government it is often easier and more expedient to create a special district (Gargan 447).

Influence of special interests - A variety of special interest groups may seek creation of special districts that benefit them (Gargan 448).

Any generalizations about how special districts operate must be regarded cautiously; and for every stereotype there doubtless exist thousands of counter examples (Gargan 449).

In contrast to most general-purpose governments, most special districts are engaged in production of only one good or service. Additionally, the goods and services that special districts provide and/or produce may be less of a classic "public good" than many of those provided by general-purpose governments. (Simply stated, public goods are those whose consumption cannot be excluded from those who do not pay for them, such as clean air or street lights). Some special districts, therefore can rely more on user fees or charges levied on those who directly benefit from the services they provide (Gargan 451-52).

Special districts may be less constrained by the multiple goals and objectives with which other governments typically must contend. Specifically, special districts may be less likely to be judged on the equity of services they provide, freeing them to focus on efficiency (Gargan 452).

Since special districts on the whole are more dependent on federal aid than any other type of government they may frequently be engaged in dependent management. Their continued reception of intergovernmental aid is typically contingent on following rules and regulations regarding the use of such funds (Gargan 452).

In contrast to general-purpose governments, particularly cities, special district governments tend to maintain extremely low public profiles in the sense that citizens tend to be ignorant of their actions and even their existence (Gargan 453).

Low public profile has two immediate implications for the management of special districts: (1) they may frequently be able to exercise a fair amount of latitude in policy without worrying about public reaction to the decision; and (2) they may be less likely to generate the kind of public support that some public agencies are able to garner when funding cuts or other threats are imminent (Gargan 453).

Critics of fragmentation argue that too many governments make for unaccountable and ultimately poorly administered government; they see special districts as part of a large problem of uncoordinated government (Gargan 454).

Proponents of multiple governments and special districts, notably public choice theorists, maintain that fragmented government makes good economic sense. They tend to see special districts as part of a more efficient and ultimately more democratic approach to local government (Gargan 454).

The cornerstone of the reformers' critique of multiple governments and special districts is that they tend to divide up the responsibility and authority of local government in such a way that it is impossible for government to address problems in a coordinated, rational fashion (Gargan 454).

A special district that handles only one aspect of a many-sided problem may do so with harmful results. Pg. 455 City government will look at issues not only from a fire perspective but also from a police, planning, water/sewer, etc., perspective

Without any semblance of strategic plan or centralized direction and guidance. There are, simultaneously, too many hands on the throttle and none on the rudder (Gargan 455).

The more special district and governments in the area, the less likely citizens are able to keep tabs on them (Gargan 455).

Because districts might see themselves distributed inequitably over a geographic area they might delivery service inequitably within their own jurisdictions (Gargan 456).

Several case studies point to manipulation of existing enabling laws by developers and other private interests to create districts to cater to their needs. Local government becomes local government by the set of private values (Gargan 456).

Particularly during the past decade, much of the relevant scholarship in this area has been directed toward empirical studies that often demonstrate the smaller units of governments (such as special districts) are equally or even more efficient than larger ones. Much of this research is informed by the theoretical perspective of "public choice." Proponents of special districts note that reformers tend to confuse too much government with too many governments (Gargan 456).

Proponents of special districts assert the following propositions: (Gargan 457)

1. Linkage of provision of public services to appropriate geographic areas. Defenders of special districts argue that special districts are needed to overcome the limitations and problems posed by existing political boundaries that often do not correspond to service needs.
2. Special districts may be appropriate under the following geopolitical circumstances:
 - A. Where the physical boundaries of a problem extend beyond the boundaries of the general-purpose government
 - B. Where significant communities of interest and interdependencies do not conform to existing general-purpose boundaries.
3. Lower Overhead Costs. Special districts are leaner, less bureaucratic agencies than most general-purpose governments
4. Avoidance of public service monopolies. Public choice theorists argue that larger general-purpose governments can constitute public service monopolies, and therefore tend to be inefficient providers. Numerous governments, including special districts, by contrast, may provide intergovernmental competition. To the extent that governments compete with one another, they may be more likely to offer services at competitive, more economically efficient prices. Citizens may reinforce the more efficient governments by choosing to live in communities that offer the best public services value, a phenomenon referred to by public choice advocates as "voting with their feet".

Some contend that special districts are actually more responsive and accountable than are larger multipurpose governments. A fragmented system of local government that competes for scarce resources creates conflict and hence increases the amount of information available to voters. Such competition also constrains the behavior of elected officials and the opportunities to open them. Low turnout in special district elections may actually be a function of citizen satisfaction with their operations (Gargan 458).

Reform advocates need to realize that districts probably can be effective in certain situations, while district apologists ought to concede that districts can stand in the way of concerted efforts to deal with metropolitan and interjurisdictional problems (Gargan 458).

Carver, John. Boards That Make A Difference. Jossey-Bass Publishers. San Francisco: 1997.

Unit cost is the cost in dollars for providing a time unit of service. Unit cost comes to be the measure of whether a service organizations doing as much per dollar as it should. But unit cost is not related to the effectiveness of the service, so it does not measure productivity (efficiency in producing benefits per dollar) as social programs pretend it does. For example, the unit cost mentality leads to the assumption that \$50 per hour is better than \$65 per hour when there is absolutely no reason to

believe so. Perhaps the \$64 per hour service is 150% more effective in attaining the results (Carver 53-54).

"The Dollars and Sense of the Total Quint Concept". Fire Economics. September 2000. Vol. 1 No. 5 Pg. 33-34

The total quint concept raised labor concerns that the elimination of two separately manned vehicles meant fewer jobs for firefighters (The Dollars and Sense 34).

They financed the plan for quints with loans and the sale of pumpers and aerial trucks from the old fleet (The Dollars and Sense 34).

The department actually dispatches more personnel under the quint system than it did with the traditional two-company system. A residential fire traditionally would get two four-man pumper companies and one four-man ladder company, for a total of 12 firefighters on scene. With the quints a fire gets three four-man quints and one five-man heavy-duty rescue truck, for a total of 17 firefighters on scene (The Dollars and Sense 34).

Small pumpers are sent to simple medicals, while quints are reserved for more complex emergencies. This choice reduces the wear and tear on heavy-duty vehicles and saves maintenance costs (The Dollars and Sense 34).

The maintenance of the quints is much more than the maintaining the old fleet but the personnel savings are more than enough to make up the difference and create overall savings (The Dollars and Sense 34).

"How Two Fire Departments Re-Invented Themselves by Merging and Gaining Economic Clout". Fire Economics. September 2000. Vol. 1 No. 5 Pg. 36-37

What once were two typical departments now is one progressive, business-oriented entity that has the economic clout not only to operate efficiently but to contribute to both cities' growth. - They place a real emphasis on High Tech Industry (How Two Fire Departments Re-Invented 36).

Ten different core committees were created, and they started with a blank dry erase board and were allowed the freedom to invent their department. We hired a facilitator and trained folks in committee work and process engineering (How Two Fire Departments Re-Invented 36).

Take the best practices from both departments, or those of other agencies, and move forward (How Two Fire Departments Re-Invented 36).

They are still working on implementation details 3 1/2 years into it (How Two Fire Departments Re-Invented 36).

The labor group had to accept the fact that it was going to take some time to level things out over multiple fiscal years. That was probably the single most problematic point because the politicians couldn't afford to do the leveling immediately, and labor had to buy into the longer-term vision of creating one unified department (How Two Fire Departments Re-Invented 37).

Structure and Governance - Joint Powers Authority. The Board of the JPA includes both Mayors and a council member from each City. City Managers serve as joint Executive Directors. While the JPA Board has authority to appoint the Fire Chief, it has limited powers otherwise. For example, the JPA board serves only as an advisory body to each partner City Board that ratifies all major fiscal and labor relation decisions. Each City maintains the right to determine separately the number of fire stations and firefighters than it needs, so one City's growth does not affect the other's fire station expenses (How Two Fire Departments Re-Invented 37).

Cost Sharing - Both Cities contribute to the support services for the JPA and the combined fire department. One town

provides payroll, personnel, legal and budget services, while the other provides dispatch. One town because the support service provider because the PERS actuarial study found it economically best for the town retirement contract to become the surviving one. The cost of fire suppression operations is divided based on the number of emergencies and fire companies per city. Fire prevention costs are shared based on the number of new construction inspections per city; and hazardous materials regulation costs are split based on the number of regulated businesses per city (How Two Fire Departments Re-Invented 37).

Labor - Because salaries of firefighters in both cities were not equal prior to the merger, a comprehensive five year Memorandum of Understanding was created to level some items at the point of merger and to bring up the lower paid salaries of the one department over a four-year period. The higher paid town still gave cost-of-living increases. The two union locals merged into one and agreed to immediate joint promotions, cross-training in both cities and common overtime assignments (How Two Fire Departments Re-Invented 37).

Operations/Services - All fire station personnel were kept in their parent cities initially and were cross-trained in each others stations and fire equipment (I think you should mix immediately). The firefighters now work regularly in each other's stations for vacation or sick leave coverage. A common training system managed by one division chief was implemented. Emergency operations were completely merged with one duty chief officer responding to emergencies in both cities and fire trucks responding wherever needed. Dispatch services were consolidated into larger public safety communication center (How Two Fire Departments Re-Invented 37).